



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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## HB 27 RELATING TO DISTRICTING AND CLASSIFICATION OF LANDS

Statement for  
Senate Committee on  
Energy and Natural Resources  
Public Hearing - March 20, 1989

By  
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HB 27 would amend HRS 205-2 by excluding golf courses and driving ranges from the uses permitted on agricultural lands classified as C, D, or E except by special permit under certain amended provisions of Section 205-6.

Our statement on this bill does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

As noted in the Standing Committee Report 523, recent concerns regarding the displacement of bona fide farming operations due to the development of golf courses in agricultural districts suggests that revisions to current statutes are needed to more fairly and wisely guide land use decisions affecting agricultural lands. The deletion proposed for Section 205-2(4) (page 5, lines 4-8) to eliminate the automatic approval of golf courses and golf driving ranges on agricultural lands not classified as A or B is an appropriate action.

Amendments to Section 205-6 would permit the county planning commission to issue a special permit for golf courses and golf driving ranges on agricultural lands classified as C, D, or E under HRS 205-6. However, county planning commission decisions on all special permit requests would be subject to approval by the land use commission, if the Office of State Planning gave notice to the county planning commission and the State Land Use Commission that the proposed golf course or golf driving range may involve a matter of statewide interest.

While we concur with the intent of the bill we have some reservations about its implementation. The committee report stresses that the bill will serve to protect the potential loss of productive or potentially productive

agricultural lands but neither the bill nor the committee report appears to recognize any other potentially important needs of agricultural lands classified as C, D, or E. Specifically we believe there may be significant need associated with maintaining lands with special watershed value. As presently drafted there seems to be little guidance to the Office of State Planning as to what constitutes "statewide interest".

We note that the Environmental Council Report of April 15, 1988 on House Concurrent Resolution 267 recommended that actions that propose the use of agricultural lands other than those specified under Section 205-4.5 should be subject to Environmental Assessment under Chapter 343.

Assessment under the guidelines established by HRS 343 of the use of agriculture lands classified as C, D, or E for golf course or golf driving range use would assure that adequate information is available to the counties and state offices charged with land use decisionmaking. We urge that consideration be given to amending HB 27 in accordance with the recommendation of HCR 267.